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TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [IS](#) [KDEM](#) [KMPI](#) [ECON](#) [KPAO](#)
SUBJECT: DEMOCRATIC REFORM STRATEGY FOR THE WEST BANK AND
GAZA

REF: STATE 130991

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) Post continues to exert diplomatic and programmatic efforts to support peace between Israelis and Palestinians and the creation of an independent Palestinian state. There have been significant developments in the West Bank and Gaza since the Department approved post's strategy in August 2005 to support democratic reform. Per Reftel instructions, Post has reviewed the previous democracy strategy and recommends revising and updating the previously approved reform strategy for the West Bank and Gaza.

¶2. (C) The following is ConGen Jerusalem's recommendation for a revised reform strategy for the West Bank and Gaza:

Strategic Focus: Over the next 12-24 months, USG diplomacy and programs should support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, governed by democratic processes and the rule of law. In support of this goal, USG efforts should advance: accountable and effective institutions of government that enforce the rule of law and provide services to the Palestinian people; media that is free, objective, and accountable; political parties that have issue-based platforms and represent their constituents, needs; and an environment conducive to private sector development. Efforts should also support priorities established by the Palestinian Authority (PA) through its planning and reform process.

Desired Outcomes and Benchmarks:

- Accountable and effective national and municipal governance: in the West Bank and Gaza, courts process cases more efficiently, Palestinian police enforce the rule of law, a transparent budget process occurs at the national and municipal level, and Palestinian civil society organizations perceive key ministries to be responsive, transparent, and efficient.
- Free and responsible media: Palestinian television outlets broadcast objective and credible national and local news, transmitting throughout all of the Palestinian territories; the official national television station is considered by Palestinian civil society to broadcast free, fair,

and objective programming and news.

- Political party reform: Fatah completes internal elections for its cell, branch and regional leaders; political parties run issue-based campaigns that reflect the interests and needs of their constituents.
- Support implementation of Palestinian plans to encourage public sector financial reform and private sector growth in the West Bank and Gaza: the PA achieves significant reduction in its operating budget deficit, including through the professionalization of the civil service, while strengthening appropriate public sector financial control mechanisms. PA ministries and municipalities improve their ability to provide efficient services to the public, promote an environment that yields private sector development and economic growth, and reduces unemployment.

Policy: Senior officials should buttress the current reform efforts of the PA government and emphasize these objectives with other Palestinian counterparts. Progress on meeting the economic objectives and benchmarks listed above depend significantly on improving access and movement for Palestinians within the West Bank and between the West Bank and Gaza and the West Bank and Israel; these issues should be raised accordingly with the Government of Israel. Governance and corruption remain paramount issues for the Palestinian public; public statements by U.S. officials should address these issues and support democratic processes and institutions.

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Programming: Various factors specific to U.S. assistance for Palestinians often delay program implementation. Programming in the West Bank and Gaza are equally important to achieving reform objectives; however, it is currently very difficult to move people and materials in and out of Gaza. USG programming should support efforts to restore the PA's governance over Gaza, and respond to the significant needs of the population. USG programming plans should also support the PA's mid-term planning process and its reform and development initiatives.

WALLES